

California Medical Facility 2004-2005 Grand Jury Report

I. Reason for Investigation

The California Penal Code §919(b) mandates that the Grand Jury inquire into the condition and management of public prisons within the County.

II. Procedure

The Grand Jury:

- Interviewed the Warden and other staff
- Inspected the facility
- Observed on-site health care facilities

III. Background

The California Medical Facility (CMF) is a joint operation between the California Department of Corrections (CDC) and the California Department of Mental Health (CDMH) providing a centrally located medical and psychiatric institution for the health care needs of the male felon population in California's prisons. The facility was designed to house 2,315 inmates but has been reconfigured to accommodate 3503 inmates. At the time of this report, the population was 3,143.

CMF includes a general acute care hospital, in-patient and out-patient psychiatric facilities, a hospice unit for terminally ill inmates, housing and treatment for inmates identified with AIDS/HIV, general population and other specialized inmate housing. Additionally, the CDMH operates a licensed, acute care psychiatric hospital within CMF.

For fiscal year 2004-05, the facility has a budget of \$159,018,826. Annual cost per inmate is approximately \$54,500 compared to the California average of \$19,000 for non-medical correctional institutions.

Inmates are classified by level based on age, types of crimes committed and other factors. There are four levels: (1) minimum security, (2) dormitory housing, (3) cell housing and (4) highest security rating. A separate housing unit is provided for violent inmates.

The inmate appeal process for complaints is handled under the State Department of Corrections regulations under Title 15, Adult Detention Facilities standards.

The Education program is staffed by fourteen credentialed teachers - eight in education and six in vocational education.

CMF employs approximately 1,400 people. Recruiting and retaining medical personnel is an ongoing problem. Information received indicates a shortage of nurses and other medical personnel. Inmate visits to the CMF clinic exceed 100,000 per year, an average of 30 visits per inmate per month.

Inmates who are within 120 days of their parole date are assigned to the Re-Entry Program. The major emphasis of the program is to provide inmates with materials and philosophy for successful parole. The program is implemented by means of video, classroom participation, informative speakers and community resource materials. Emphasis is placed on employability skills, communications skills,

money management, community resources, parole resources, self esteem, appropriate social values and taking personal responsibility.

IV. Findings and Recommendations

Finding #1: CMF has a major shortage of nurses and other medical personnel.

Recommendation #1: The California Department of Corrections should consider contracting for medical services or develop recruiting programs to correct this on-going problem.

Finding #2: The Re-Entry Program appears to be a model program.

Recommendation #2: The Grand Jury recommends that CMF undertake a study to see if a longer time spent in the Re-Entry Program could make it even more successful.

V. Comments

The staff was well organized and up-to-date regarding policy and procedures. The facilities were clean and orderly. There are reciprocal agreements between CMF and the adjacent State Prison Solano on sharing resources. They also have a mutual aid agreement in case of emergencies or lockdowns.

VI. Affected agencies

- California Medical Facility
- California Department of Corrections